

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

Chairman David Obey
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,
Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Todd Tiahrt
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,
Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

April 3, 2009

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Tiahrt,

We are writing to urge you to provide \$25 million for Teach For America in the Fund for the Improvement of Education account in the FY '10 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. We are grateful for the \$14.9 million you provided in last year's omnibus bill, and we urge you to continue to support this exceptional program.

As you know, Teach For America was authorized at \$25 million as part of the "Higher Education Opportunity Act," which was passed by both the House and Senate and signed by the President on August 14, 2008. These funds will enable this outstanding national service organization to continue on its path to achieving a nation-wide collective impact of approximately 8,200 corps members serving in approximately 37 urban and rural communities around the country, positively impacting nearly 550,000 economically disadvantaged students in grades preK-12.

Teach For America has grown significantly since the program's inception in 1990, when it began with nearly 500 teachers in nine low-income regions. This year, 6,200 Teach For America corps members are in approximately 2,000 schools in 29 urban and rural regions across the country. Growing levels of federal funding have been critical to Teach For America's efforts, enabling the organization to capitalize on increased interest among top college students as well as the support of the private sector, which provides the vast majority of Teach For America's funding. Today, with applications for the upcoming school year showing more than 50 percent growth over last year, and at least three new sites opening, it is critical to maintain the current momentum.

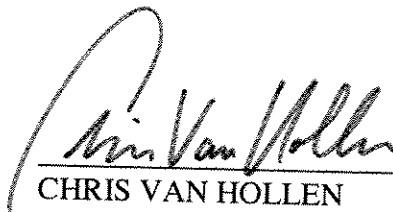
Teach For America has a demonstrated record of success in the classroom. According to a recent study by the Urban Institute, on average, high school students taught by Teach For America corps members performed significantly better on state-required end-of-course exams, especially in math and science, than peers taught by far more experienced instructors. The Teach For America teachers' effect on student achievement in core classroom subjects was nearly three times the effect of teachers with three or more years of experience.

Many corps members teach or stay in education in some capacity beyond their initial two-year commitment. Of the 14,000 alumni, 66 percent are working or studying full-time in education.

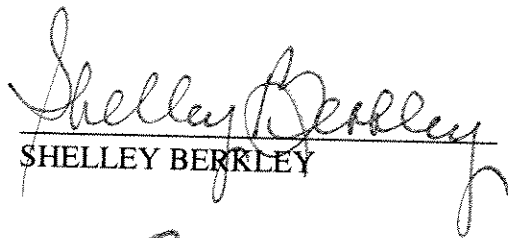
The current chancellor of the District of Columbia Public Schools, Michelle Rhee, is a Baltimore alumna. Many alumni have remained in the classroom, while others have become school administrators or formed new charter schools. The two founders of the successful Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) charter school network, Mike Feinberg and Dave Levin, are Teach For America alumni.

With adequate resources, Teach For America can continue to broaden and deepen its impact by increasing the number of talented and dedicated young individuals teaching in America's neediest communities. We urge you to continue to support this crucial program.

Sincerely,


CHRIS VAN HOLLEN


NEIL ABERCROMBIE

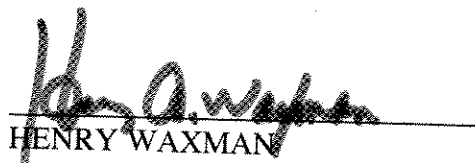

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MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

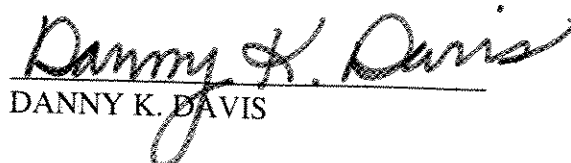

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HENRY WAXMAN


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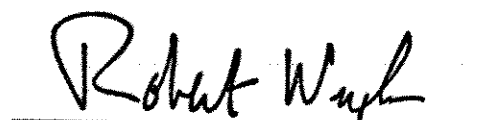

ARTUR DAVIS

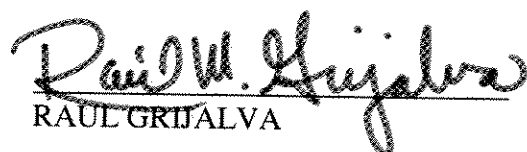

DANNY K. DAVIS



ANNA ESHOO

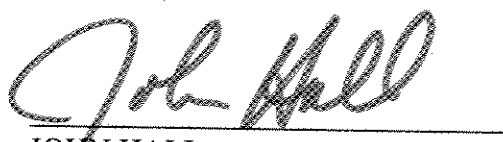

BOB ETHERIDGE



CHAKA FATTAH


ROBERT WEXLER


RAUL GRIJALVA

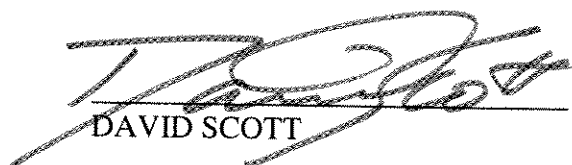

LUIS GUTIERREZ


JOHN HALL

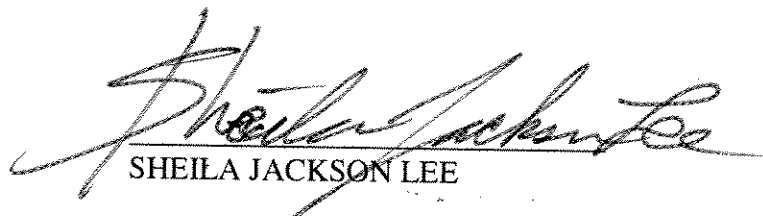

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